

IRELAND TO-DAY

BY

HON. FRANK P. WALSH

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"IRELAND TO-DAY"

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MONTREAL

ADDRESS

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DELIVERED BY

Hon. FRANK P. WALSH

IN THE

WINDSOR HALL

June 11th 1920

Mr. Chairman, Reverend Sirs, Ladies and Gentlemen:—

I am deeply sensible of the warmth of your reception tonight, and still, thank God, it is the reception that a man gets every place in this wide world that comes with words upon his lips so sacred to the cause which lies closest to our hearts tonight, a free and independent Ireland (Applause). Upon the tomb of a great man in American statesmanship I found inscribed these words: "Who saves his country, saves all things, and all things saved will bless him; who lets his country die, ignobly dies himself and all things do but curse him."

Scarce a year ago, without any merit on my part, I was given a task which was to me the proudest that could be assigned to human hands or human brains. At a Convention held in the very cradle of American Liberty, Philadelphia, composed of over five thousand delegates—larger than any convention ever assembled in a legislative capacity in the United States; four times greater than any Convention which ever met to promulgate the principles under which our people were to live; greater than any called for the nomination of a President of the United States—we were charged with the duty of proceeding to Paris and there attempting to present the cause of Irish Independence, and the double duty, if possible, to go to Ireland with as much official sanction as possible and bring to America, and through America, to the world, a report of the actual conditions in that land.

I have thought many times of the three great significances on which my eyes rested and which were brought to my great consciousness. On the boat going over, we had a purely American celebration, and a young man in khaki, a private soldier, opened the proceedings by reading the American Declaration of Independence—that document that brought

hope to the world more than a century ago that perhaps we were to have in every part of the world a government under which no human being would ever blasphemously claim to represent God in the heavens and rule other men, but that from that time the idea should spread all over the world: that all Governments derived their powers from the consent of the governed—(Applause), and when I heard that age-old document read again, the thought that came to my mind was this: substitute the word "Ireland" for "America;" substitute George V for George III; substitute 1920 for 1776, and you had the case of Ireland stated (Prolonged applause).

When, upon one of the most beautiful mornings that God ever gave the people of his world, I drove through O'Connell Street and saw that monument to the valor of a handful of men who were willing to vindicate the principle closest to their hearts, by their lives; when, through the paneless windows of the Dublin Post Office, showed God's sun that morning on the great statue of that splendid Irishman, that great Protestant, Charles Stuart Parnell (Prolonged applause). This statue has at its base an inscription which seems, as it does, to reach back to the furthest point of the history of the Irish people and extend a hand to those battlers for liberty of 1916, 1919 and 1920 (Applause), because the inscription is the immortal answer of Parnell to Gladstone when the Home Rule Bill was up and he asked the question: "If Ireland is accorded Home Rule, will she be satisfied, and may we then understand that we will go on without any further friction?" Parnell, the greatest tactician of his day, facing the crisis as to whether he should stand as a free man or compromise with principle, Parnell's answer was "No man can set bounds to the onward march of a nation." (Applause).

His Home Rule Bill did not pass, but to-day there is an organized government in Ireland, based on the free consent of the governed, which will go on until no man or woman will say it nay and it will be the only government to which the people of Ireland will give their willing and peaceful obedience (Applause).

May I say here with a twinge of boastfulness, because many of us are of Irish blood, that Ireland is not only a crimeless nation, but they are a moral people. The whole world pays tribute to the chastity of their womanhood. All the world acknowledges the moral courage of the sons of Ireland.

Therefore I would not, had I the time, dwell upon the wrongs of Ireland, the wrongs which she has suffered through almost a thousand years; her struggles for freedom. Nor would I stop here to attempt to paint again the glories of her sons and daughters, not only in the realm of the great propaganda for liberty all over the world, but in the sphere of statesmanship, letters and art; all these things that come out of the fullness of the educated human being and all that makes life worth living.

Time is pressing upon the Irish people to-day; time is crowding those of us who hope to see the fruition of her hopes, so we are discussing

all over the world, practically in every tongue, not her ancient glories or her past wrongs, but her present-day rights (Applause). Ireland does not ask us to secure freedom for her; she has secured her own. She does not ask the people of America or Canada to set up a government for her; she has set up her own government (Applause), but she does ask—and I heard it said to a great meeting in the Auditorium in Chicago of ten thousand people inside, with a hundred thousand people crowding all the blocks around, with ten speakers speaking—I heard the greatest statesman of any country, Eamonn De Valera (Prolonged Applause) make his appeal for the people and give voice to what the Irish people believe, hope and expect from the people of this great North America.

In December 1918, an Election was called throughout Ireland, under the form of English law and accepted because at that time, the English government was the only reigning one, and the Irish people as a law-abiding people desired not only to act coherently but intelligently.

I have said many times, that were not for the innate justice and intellectual vigor of the Irish race there would be nothing known in the world as the Common Law of England, as the Code Napoleon, as the fundamental principles underlying the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, and your courts, because these rules of conduct come down to us from the early days from the hills of Brehon (Applause). They are the basis of the rules of conduct among all the higher civilizations of the world to-day.

So, when an order was called for an Election, the Irish people abided by that law. They made their appeal to the country so clearly that none might misunderstand it. There is no place in the world to-day, I care not what the Government may be, in opposition to setting up an independent government in Ireland. No man in any country, ruler or lay man, can gainsay what God has given me the privilege of saying to you to-night.

They declared that the time had come when the people of Ireland proposed to accept the pledges of the Allies and set up a government of their own based upon the free consent of the governed, and they declared in their proclamation that they had but one immediate objective, that they were placing candidates in the field as parliamentary representatives, with but one pledge: that if elected by the majority of the people under that law of Britain, every man gave his pledge to the electors men and women of Ireland—the women voting for the first time—that so long as life remained in their bodies not one of them would ever take an oath of allegiance to any foreign king, power or potentate (Applause).

By a majority greater than any by which a President of the United States has ever been elected; by a proportionate vote greater than any Constitutional Amendment has ever received, they elected a body that resolved itself, not into the House of Commons but into the Dail Eirann, the Congress of the Irish race (Applause).

Another significance of my visit to Ireland was appearing before that body in the great round room with the marble statues of Ireland's old heroes surrounding us, under the frowning guns of the army of occupation, being escorted to that hall by the President of the Irish Republic, who, if the law had effective force, was under it an escaped prisoner from jail, a felon under the law, but the people had spoken, Vox Populi, Vox Dei, the people had spoken; God himself seemed to have touched him, and he walked into that hall a free man, he was as free a man under those guns as you were when you walked in here to-night.

No idea, my friends, was ever put in jail; no idea was ever strangled on the scaffold. John Brown was a felon when he gave up his life, but you all know the refrain of that old American song "John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave, but his soul goes marching on." And so we find the effort, an effort tremendous in its tragic consequences, one that causes the most concerned to practice the greatest restraint that they may not speak or act with too great impetuosity, but nevertheless the idea itself marches on as the very soul, the pure white soul, I am glad to say, of the Irish nation, and little by little the material things are gathered, the body comes to surround the soul, and perhaps the action of this great body of democrats that is now meeting in Montreal, the word we hope they may send, may be the last message that will cause that body to stand up with a living and breathing soul and the Republic of Ireland to function.

I would not mention conditions in Ireland except to tell its beautiful spirit. It was but a few weeks until the plan was to mature for their great President to come to the United States. It was decided that while he was gone Arthur Griffiths, that great leader of thought, the father of Sinn Fein, would be in charge. My dear friend, Harry Boland, said that Sinn Fein was not translatable literally in English but that it meant, as close as we could come to it, "We, ourselves," but perhaps, he said, after being through America and hearing so much comment on our own brand of patriotism, it meant, he said, one hundred per cent. Americanism to them and one hundred per cent. Irishism. But another Irish friend gave the term a new translation, from the American standpoint, he said, it meant 1776 Irishism (Applause).

Upon the day that this election was held there was in Ireland a volunteer army of something like a hundred and seventy-five thousand men—it is now over two hundred thousand—it was established for the defence of their own land, just as your army and our army is established. It met, and is meeting, with no opposition from the people, who believe that they are being protected by that Army. All of us, I assume, are lovers of peace. I hated war always; I hated the last one and I will hate the next one, but when that last war came my heart not only throbbed with pride but with devotion when I saw the two boys I loved more than life in the army of my country going to vindicate the prin-

ciple by which the organized people of America said they must fight the autocrat who would sweep the world and bend it to his will (Applause).

I know that the Irish have that spirit also and I know that it must be true when they say, as Arthur Griffiths said in Albert Hall in London, before ten thousand people inside and twenty thousand outside, that volunteer army was Irish and it was there to stay; if it was obliterated two hundred thousand more would take its place, and two hundred thousand more would replace them (Applause). No Government is worthy of the name and no people are worthy of freedom who are not willing to die for it.

A few weeks ago a gentleman—I would not wish to say anything disrespectful, but his greatest claim to fame is that he married one of the daughters of a great American multi-millionaire—Lord Decies was official censor; it was his duty not to let anyone know anything about Ireland. As he came off the boat in New York he gave an interview—as is the custom of diplomats—and in his talk about Ireland he said "There is not a day but they are shooting down unarmed British soldiers on the streets and highways in Ireland." A witty Irishman remarked: "Faith they are not unarmed when they come there" (Laughter). It may be worthy of observation that perhaps the Irish volunteers Army to-day is the only large army great enough to operate in a major way in their own country, whose arms almost entirely consist of the arms they took away from the invading army. (Laughter and applause).

We Americans and Canadians are so close, at least to the theory if not the principle, of representative government and individual freedom that it is beyond our ken to understand the situation in Ireland. A man is but the unit of the State or Nation. I see no difference—and I don't believe you do—from the standpoint of morals, between a wrongful act committed by a nation and one committed by a man.

There is something deep in metaphysics that is expressed by the situation in Ireland. No Army ever operated without a commander-in-chief, and they have their commander-in-chief. Here is a country that has set up a Republic with a legislative body and a President. There we have the situation of Government centralized as clearly as it is in Canada or in the United States. If there is something wrong, potentially and morally, about that endeavor being made; if, as some of the press of North America would have you believe, these men are not patriots and statesmen, but conspirators and malefactors, that these men fighting in the Volunteer Army are not like the forerunners of the American Army that soaked the streets of New York and Boston with their blood, then the most powerful government on the earth, with the largest navy, with a seasoned army, could proceed to the very heart of that government; could take the chief army, and execute the President—but they dare not do it because the people have spoken, and that government is going on. The greatest crime in the world would be to seize the representatives of the Government of Canada or the President of

the United States and attempt to strangle them on the scaffold. (Prolonged applause).

Now, there is an orderly government functioning through its chosen representatives, fairly elected, so we have the first step. All the members of Daill Earann, now in jail, meet regularly as the governing body of Ire and.

What is the next step, I may ask, towards the processes of an orderly government? It is of course to have the means, the financial means, of functioning. So, under a Resolution of the Daill Earann, a bond issue was called for to start the operations of this government, and in Ireland alone it was oversubscribed three times. (Applause) So that they have their own means.

They sent an appeal to this country, different from any Irish appeal that was ever made before, not a dollar for political purposes, but all for the restoration of that great old nation materially, industrially and agriculturally. The pledge given for the honest and wise administration of this great fund—I betray no secret when I say it has become a great fund—is in the hands of a Board of Trustees as definitely and as legally established and bonded as is the Treasury of the United States of America. That fund is not only being governed and controlled, it will be spent, every dollar of it, by the trustees of the Irish people, Eamonn De Valera, James O'Meara and that splendid man, representative of the Great Father, and the most beloved, if I may say so, of the Irish Hierarchy, Bishop Fogarty of Killaloo. (Applause)

When the appeal came to this country of ours I was very proud to act on the Committee of the American Commission on Irish Independence. The last time I looked at their accounts I found the fund rolling up over six million dollars with a very small organization, and I am glad to say that if this fight is to go on we can raise fifty million dollars in the United States (Applause), so that the Government has the financial means.

Ireland is a great agricultural country. The taxes that England takes out of Ireland are a very small thing. Were I arguing the case of Ireland I would not refer to the hundred million they take from Ireland without any return, because under the economic pressure put on Ireland they suffer more than they did under the old penal laws; the substance of the people of Ireland is taken away from them. For instance, England has the power to fix the price of all products Ireland may turn out. England has control of all the railroads. As Dr. Irwin told you, it costs as much to take a hundred pounds or a ton to Belfast from a distance of fifteen miles, as it costs to haul a ton of freight one thousand miles in Canada or in the United States, so that they have economic laws and forces at work that would make it impossible unless Ireland, through her own Government and by her resolute will, breaks down the barrier.

Therefore the Irish Republic have sent their trade representatives all over the world. Any place in which Ireland can hope to find a mar-

ket, before sixty days, will have a representative. A protest has been made over the stoppage of English liners calling at Irish ports. We hope they will stop there again, but if not it won't make much difference because we have two lines of steamers running to Ireland ourselves (Applause) and they are bringing our materials to Ireland and loading their ships coming back. They are extending their freight lines to the Baltic and other European ports and it will no longer be simply a question of trading between America and Ireland.

There are things which governments do, that are even more important than establishing trade. One of these is the conservation of the brains, the soul and welfare morally and from an educational standpoint of the people. We all know to what a low estate the foreign schools of Ireland have fallen and we all know the splendid renaissance that had as its basis the education of the Irish people, so when securing there independence it will be an Irish Ireland from one end of it to the other. The old spirit that was planted by Padraic Pearse is the very groundwork of the Irish educational system. Can anything be more beautiful than the motto he placed over dear St-Enda's, for which he gave up his life. If I can recollect it, it is "A clear brain, a clean heart and a strong arm."

The slums of Dublin, the places in which the productive workers of that great city have been compelled to exist—not to live—are the vilest in the world, saving alone Belfast and the East Side of London; I went through them and they are far worse than we know them in our great manufacturing cities. They are all old dwellings never adapted for the use of several families in each. In house after house we found ten people all living in one room; the steps absolutely gone, a mud path leading from the street to the front portion of the house.

A great body of men and women, financed by themselves not by the Government, and sanctioned by the Daill Earann, have taken up that work and are making wonderful progress bringing about decent conditions for the workers of Dublin. The children were neglected, as we understand it. Disease was rampant; in some quarters it was difficult to find a child that was not demanding dental or eye treatment. So a splendid woman, authorized by the Daill Earann, a Sinn Feiner from the word go, took up this great work and, without any help from the foreign Government, is doing work comparable to that being done by the Board of Health of New York or any of the Health Departments of the great cities on the North American Continent.

I could go on, as I had the great privilege of doing before the Foreign Relations Committee in Washington, and recite function after function that this Government of Ireland is carrying on, leading to the conclusion that it is the only Government existing in Ireland to-day.

What is it that makes a Government; that makes it possible for society to live as an organized unit? It is the agreement among the people themselves for rules of conduct with their basic foundation in

justice, with a further agreement as to how these laws or rules of conduct shall be executed and to whom allegiance shall be given. Without that we are plunged in anarchy; we have worse than no Government.

The Government in Ireland, as known prior to the Election of 1918, was hostile to the people of Ireland. We went over there and I had the very great honor, with Governor Dunn and J. J. Ryan, of being denounced as a falsefier by the Home Secretary for Ireland, Ian Macpherson when he said it was false what we found in Ireland, and since that time, I understand, the press of the world has paid close attention to that little island, and so much has happened that I still stand aghast at our conservative statement.

We were asked to investigate Ireland by the Prime Minister of England, through Sir William Wiseman, his secretary, and the request was endorsed by George Gavin Duffy and Sean O'Cealligh, both of whom were in Paris at the time.

In Mount Joy jail, we saw the very flower of intellectual Ireland herded in a steel cage in the open air; a cage built on the same plan as the cages for wild animals in the zoos, on public exhibition so that anyone coming in would see them. We saw there William Sears, owner and publisher of his own newspaper—destroyed a dozen times but started again under "New Ireland," "Old Ireland" and every name you could imagine. There was Charles Pierce Beasley, whom I compare with the great newspaper-owners of the early days in the United States, an upstanding, fine young man under forty. We were almost present when a physical assault was made on him as we were going out.

We heard that the prisoners were ordered under pain of severe punishment not to say a word while we were there, but Beasley stood up and, in a dignified manner and in a stentorian voice, he said "Long Live the Irish Republic and the Nation" (Prolonged applause). While we were still in the Governor's room, before leaving the jail, we heard a shout in the outer hall, in a man's voice, saying "Witness, I am about to be beaten for crying 'Long Live the Republic'." So, without standing on the formalities, our delegation ran out and there we saw a great big fellow taking Beasley out. We told the Governor we desired to find out at first hand their intentions towards Beasley before we left. He went out and then came back and said that Beasley was to be brought to the Assistant Governor, but he assured us that no punishment would be inflicted upon him, and we since found out that no punishment was inflicted on him.

We found this great number of men in jail in that crimeless country. Mount Joy is not a jail as we understand it. It is a great, large penitentiary; men are confined there for life; it has room for more than a thousand; it has great workshops, like any American Penitentiary. In that great prison, upon inquiry and consultation of the records, there were exactly six individuals for infractions of what we know as the crimin-

al laws, and the other thousand that were in there were there for no reason except for expressing the same sentiments for which Thomas Jefferson was made President of the United States. (Prolonged applause)

We saw men from that prison in their homes, who had been rendered invalids for life by the cruel treatment received there and in other English jails. This was one of the things stoutly denied by Ian Macpherson, but since proven by thousands of affidavits, including soldiers of the English Army who left in disgust at the treatment these men received. The officers were allowed to come into the cells and beat these men with batons while some of them had their hands handcuffed behind them.

We saw the widows of the men who died of pneumonia on account of having ice-cold water poured on them in their cells in the depth of winter. We saw two men, and got affidavits of those who knew cases of dozens that were rendered insane in those cells by this treatment.

We were in the houses of families where outrages against decency were committed on the women. We talked to the fathers and mothers of the children that were kidnapped. If there is one thing sacred to the Irish race I believe it is the inviolability of the Irish home. I say that the great heroines of the early days on this continent were, not the men who built our railroads and did all the hard, laborious and sacrificial work, but it was their wives and their mothers who worked to hold that little family together and educate their children in the fear of God. Their oppressors, understanding that, deliberately, time after time, under pretense sometimes of taking them as witnesses, took children of nine and ten years and transported them to England, and for weeks their families would not know where they were. Young men not yet out of their teens, without the pretense of a formal trial, were ordered not to live or be in a tier of counties within fifty miles of their homes; sentenced to banishment as much as the Czar's ukase sent his miserable victims to far off Siberia. (Cries of Shame).

Now, as I said, I would not dwell on this fact if it were not but to attempt to give a little background of what Ireland is doing for herself. We hear of things happening there that sometimes shock us, placed in peaceful surroundings as we are, but so far as I am concerned, I see the great overwhelming crime of it all: that those individual cruelties, horrible as they are, are not anything that can compare to that great moral crime of destroying a man's belief in human nature. (Applause).

Even the small property rights were not protected. The colossal governmental crime of taking away their substance ran to petty larcency. One store, operated by two young ladies, for three generations in the same place, the soldiers sacked it as the Huns did in Belgium. Their little property was all taken, even their little household trinkets.

So the greatest adventure of all in a government was demanded of these men setting up the Irish Government, and they established a judicial system. I practised law for more than thirty years,

and I want to stand here in this presence tonight and say that the judicial body that framed the fundamental law of Canada or of North America, could get some splendid ideas from the Code of Laws established by the Irish Republic. (Prolonged applause).

By force of circumstances they do not have the means of great expenditure that we have to operate our courts, but that is a virtue, because while we of the more refined judicial system might believe it was not all that was desirable, the very existence of the case have made it so and the love that the people have for their own institutions make it so. They give their willing obedience, and I say here, and challenge denial because I say it in public; we had it by our own direct information in our two mailing systems from Ireland to the United States—within five months two thousand civil cases over property rights between individuals and corporations were adjudicated on, with but five appeals to the higher courts. (Applause). There is an association in America for the reform of the law and movements are spreading across England to reform the law, but to-day, as I say, the innate love of these people for their own government and their own institutions have bridged those difficulties and started a form of simpler judicature, perhaps, but it has proven a great blessing and a living example for our older Republican Government to follow in the future.

Now there is one question left, if I may be bold enough to go so far. It is, whether this government will be permitted to function in all of its branches without loss of life, with only small loss of life or with a great loss of life, but function it will or all the Irish people will be annihilated.

Every meeting such as this saves hundreds of lives I believe in Ireland. If a Resolution is passed by this Convention, (American Federation of Labor), as I see forecasted in the newspapers (Prolonged applause), because I am not a member of any labor body, while they have my deep sympathy, I would not undertake to suggest or forecast their action, but if the Resolution is passed it will save more innocent lives in Ireland than the Red Cross saved in any comparable section of the battle front in the late war. (Applause).

There was a Home Rule Bill introduced, (jeers and laughter) that had as one of its objects the segregation of Ulster. Have you observed what has happened since? Two counties have fallen away from segregation and have gone in with the South. (Applause). We are getting right into Belfast. You heard Dr. Irwin tell you that this is not a religious question. The greatest leaders of Protestant thought in the United States; men like Dr. Aikid, Professor Pope; all these men are the greatest proponents of Irish independence, and, when this fund gets to work cleaning up housing conditions in Belfast, taking care of those great soldiers of industry, struck down by the factory owners—the Belfast manufacturer is the most grasping and selfish in the whole world—when they see the Government working for them and their families, there will be no question of Ulster segregation. (Applause).

The most significant action that has thus far been taken in the United States, I think, was taken a few weeks ago in New York. The representatives of the Central Labor body of New York met in historic Cooper Union—I love to go there as an orator, I feel an impression of sanctity when I have the privilege of speaking there, because it was in that hall in 1860 that the Illinois Rail Splitter, who had been abused and parodied as a baboon, raised his great voice on behalf of human liberty and started the fight which struck the shackles from four million black slaves in America. (Applause) In that same hall those men met, representing five hundred thousand of the real producing masses of greater New York. Their action was followed by the Central Labor body of Chicago, representing almost four hundred thousand of the workers in that vicinity.

In Ireland they have the most intelligent, law-abiding, conservative and coherent labor organization that I have met with in any part of the world. There is not a man of that but what has intellect; not a man that has not courage and not one of them, unless it happened within thirty days, that was not confined in an English jail. They understand that finally that question is going to be solved by the working people of Ireland, because it is a working nation; the handful of financiers that control the destinies of Ireland are on their way out to-day because Sinn Fein has started a Government Bank. (Applause). You see that tis branches are established all over Ireland, the main bank in Dublin being a great success.

As I speak to you tonight the manufacturers of Belfast, living by the exploitation of little children and hunger-driven women—I would not undertake to give the exact figures, but before we went into the war the women in the great linen industry, some of the most skilled workers, were working for a penny an hour. (Cries of shame). The history of Belfast is an economic history alone, and when its workers, and they are not from Belfast exclusively but from all over Ireland, because it is a great national movement—when these workers, say together as they have already said in the South of Ireland: "There will be no production unless the people who create your wealth are given the necessities of life."

Was this ever more splendidly expressed than on the day following the day the Prime Minister of England declared in the House of Commons that if the prisoners died in the hunger strike they would be guilty of self-destruction because the Government had no intention of yielding in the slightest degree. So Ireland was brought face to face with another murder, as they deemed it, of the flower of their manhood, and every wheel stopped turning in Ireland. (Applause).

I saw but a few days ago the most thrilling picture that my eyes ever rested upon. A great concourse of people with a little slip of an Irish colleen standing on a hastily constructed platform saying the Rosary. The gate of the prison opened and a man came out; they thought it was

someone coming to announce the death of some of the prisoners, but no, it was the "falling of the Bastile" and the Irish Volunteer Army poured into the prison yard of Mount Joy to hug their brothers and bring them back to life. (Prolonged applause). So, the action in New York and in Chicago had perhaps a greater significance to me than perhaps it had to you.

I wish for the sake of our common humanity; I wish for the sake of the triumph of justice and orderly government that those Resolutions could be burned into the heart, soul and consciousness of every diplomat and every ruler of men throughout the world, because I believe as firmly as that I am my maker's creature that through that path alone must come to salvation of our civilization as we understand it.

The President of my nation, our Chief Executive assured us when our boys were marching away to war, and again two months before the Armistice was signed, that this conflict, so far as we were concerned, had a definite object; it was to save the world from autocracy and to make War impossible. He had responded on behalf of a hundred and fifteen millions of people to the cry of the head of the British people who declared that his government was pursuing this mighty contest in arms for motives of the purest chivalry; he said they did not want a yard of territory, not another atom of power, but they were fighting in order that the rights and liberties of the small nations of the earth might be vindicated. In response to that our President stated definitely—because we asked him as Americans, we felt the throb of Ireland, we felt the beautiful grass growing on the graves of our ancestors; we asked our President if that meant the ending of Ireland's thousand-year fight; we asked if that meant the rights and liberties of small nations subjected by the enemy and subjected by the Allies—his answer was "That means the rights and liberties of the small nations we would like to extend it to, and to some of the small nations that we might not like to extend it to, and it applies to the whole world." (Applause).

Around that Peace Table the people from all over were represented, For the first time in history, they were not politicians, but representatives of the people, and they were there to draw up laws that would end war for ever. At that table it was attempted—but it failed—to create a greater wrong than any ever known in history; a wrong which would have left almost half of the people subject to and enslaved by less than half their numbers. One big nation, already rich beyond dreams, came out with millions of square miles of territory of the most valuable mineral and agricultural lands in the whole world.

Instead of representatives of the people we have the Ministers of Kings and the representatives of big business who live by the exploitation of the poor and the struggles of the weak all over the world to-day. But let me predict this; the people, the real producers want no more war; they want to be allowed to live in peace and have a square division of the product of their own labor, (Prolonged applause), so the sig-

nificance of these Resolutions is that the mastery of man over man must not if civilization, as we know it, is to be spared a welter of blood and our common humanity saved from utter annihilation.

The people of every nation must from this time henceforward accept full responsibility for the crimes of the nation. They can no longer shift that responsibility to the shoulders of statesmen, diplomats or King's Ministers—these are but the servants of the people. It is we who man the armies of the world; it is we who sail the navies; it is our hands which fashion the weapons of war; it is we who transport the provender for the troops and the materials for their dastardly trade. In the old Roman amphitheatre it is said that when the great ruler held his thumbs down the gladiator died and when he held his thumbs up the gladiator lived. Well, the great producers of the world are holding up their thumbs; the world must live. (Applause).

There is one Council of Nations to which I can give full agreement from my heart—I have heard it discussed and discussed it before both of our Houses—I am in favor of the convocation of all peoples of the earth, to make it impossible for any king or government, whether with or without the consent of the people—to make it clear that no one shall have the right to act without representation being made to that Council. The representatives on that Council to be selected by the free vote of all the men and all the women of the nation. That includes the United States of America. It being an international body, they should have but one governing function in their Constitution, and that is the absolute freedom of the seas, because that is the only international thing. (Applause). That the representatives of America, for that is the country for which I have the right to speak, shall go in with an imperative mandate, and that is, that war shall not be lawful any place upon earth except after a free vote, after the men and women of the nation affected and a three-quarters majority in favor of war. With the further instruction that if that mandate is not accepted by the nations of the earth, America will retire to her former place of splendid isolation and wait until the world is ready to deny the right of a king or the representatives of big business to declare war for trade purposes. (Prolonged applause). I believe that the people of every part of the world are coming to this line of thought.

The principles which I have tried so feebly to enunciate here are not only held in Ireland, they are held in France, in Italy, in England. I am no hater of England. I heard Nevinson, Editor of the London Nation, two weeks ago. He made a striking simile. Speaking at the Liberal Club in New York he said the only attitude a decent Englishman has to come to is to receive Ireland with open hands and to say he is in favor of having Dominion Home Rule. He should say "The time is past to speak about it; go your way; you have a government; we withdraw our army of occupation. Those of us who understand

you love you, and we hope that in a few years you will see that our purpose to you is a good one, but anyway you are free to go your way."

The reason England gives for not wanting to give Ireland her freedom is that it is impossible for her to have a free state or nation at her very door because invading armies might attack her.

Ireland free, would be a great protection to England, but as she now is she is a continual menace.

I have seen a prominent Englishman his eyes filled up with tears say "You ask me as an Englishman what I feel. I say that many Englishmen feel as I do and their number is growing every day. When they think of this Irish question they feel like a man must feel who comes home and finds his mother drunk on the floor every night." I believe that man spoke from his heart. I believe there is a great body of English thought especially coming from those who look at the economic angle of labor. They feel it a crying disgrace, especially after this great war, to stand in the face of the world as a great big bully strangling a small nation in defiance of the pledge made that took two hundred thousand of the very flower of American manhood and the most valorous and splendid men of the Dominion of Canada.

The men of Ireland are struggling to set up their institutions. It has been impossible to learn the truth about Ireland so rigorous has been the censorship for untold years; word had to come almost individually. Many people hearing an announcement such as I am making tonight would rise up to deny it as being unbelievable. It is true that some, driven to desperation, perform deeds which not only cost them their own lives but besmirch the case they had closest to their hearts.

But the case of Ireland is now staged in a great theatre and the audience is the whole civilized world. The history of our father's country is being studied as never before. The contributions to liberty every place made by men of our blood are beginning to be household words, and so a mighty wave of splendid sympathy is going up and a clear appeal is being made to the intellect as never before. Ireland is a country that with all its misfortune and struggles for freedom has never lost its soul. Those old people in their cabins in Ireland call conditions prosperous now. It is prosperous from the standpoint of comparison but none of us would call it that. I always remember the great light in the eyes of those old people and in the eyes of the little children. A good priest came to see me before he went back to Ireland and asked me if I wished to send any message to Ireland. I said "Not yet, not yet; I hope to bring my own message to Ireland, but in the meantime when you go back to Ireland, if it were possible, I would ask you to kiss every little boy and girl you meet for me.

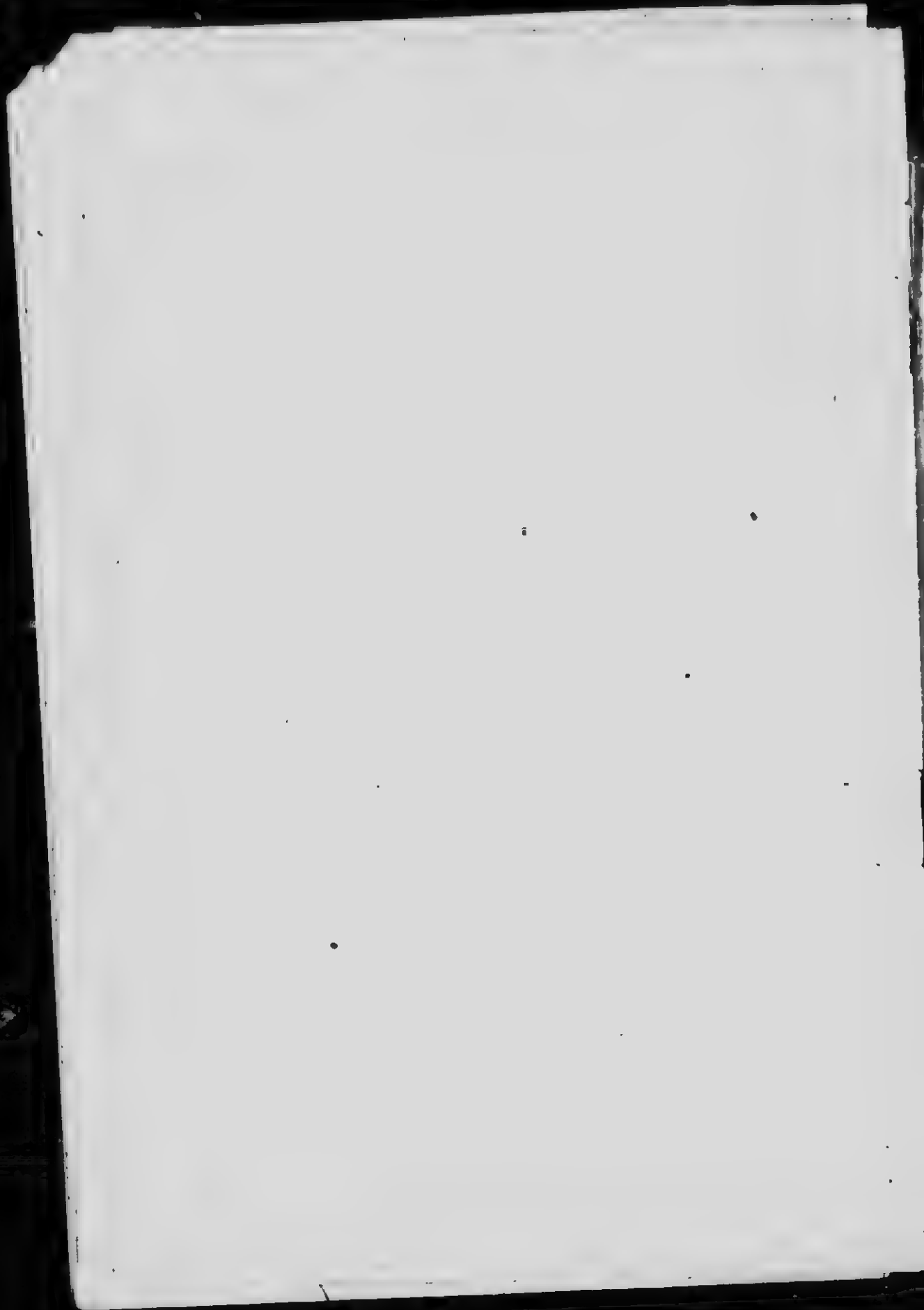
The Irish are the most soulful race in the world and they have a higher standard of morals and society than any other country. The society in Dublin is higher, intellectually and morally than in any other place. I never heard a lady in Dublin discussing the question of her

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domestic servants or the high cost of living or her bodily ailments as they do in America. I remember going through a little town in Galway with the President of the Irish Republic and it was wonderful to see the hundreds of people that came out to greet him on his way.

My thought is this, and I give it to you, that the great God takes his own good time to establish justice and he saw in the energy of that race; in the valor, the intellect, the vigor of that race, a great instrument for his hand and he willed that they might be kept in subjection, just as His Son was, for the soul of the world, so that one day when he was ready and the world was ripe for it, through that instrument the world would be made free.







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